

Willard SAC Meeting Minutes for October 5, 2015 (Approved)
(Prepared by Kate Hennighausen)

Present: Pat Fernandes, Liz Berk, Jeanne Connolly, Katie Kerr, Kate Mullen, Rudd Coffey, Rebecca Comjean, Kate Hennighausen, and Anne Kilroy

Welcome and Introduction of Members: Principal Fernandes expressed appreciation to new and returning council members for their willingness to serve. New parents members are Rudd Coffey, Rebecca Comjean, and Anne Kilroy. New teacher members are Katie Kerr and Kate Mullen.

Role of SAC: Principal Fernandes explained that the main purposes of this mandated school council are: (1) to develop a school improvement plan, and (2) to be aware of what is happening at the school, especially regarding student achievement.

Classroom News:

Kindergarten (presented by Jeanne Connolly): Kindergarteners are learning routines and rules of the classroom and Willard school. In math, the teachers are piloting the *Everyday Math 4* curriculum. In literacy the students are enjoying read alouds, learning about rhyming, and beginning to learn about the "letters of the week" using the Telian Lively Letters program. In science, the students are learning about the five senses in science and using the five senses to observe the Willard school tree during the transition to fall. Some classes are learning about, observing, and interacting with snails

First Grade (presented by Jeanne Connolly): First graders are settling in and adjusting to long school days. They are working on narrative writing and learning lowercase letters. Reading groups began last week, once TCAs were complete. Students had Apple Fun during their literacy block and engaged in a variety of apple related activities. The current read aloud is the My Father's Dragon series. In math, students are working on number sense, solving story problems, learning math games, counting up and back, working on number formation, and learning greater than/less than. In science, the topic is air. Students are learning how to make observations while running experiments with air and water.

Second Grade (presented by Jeanne Connolly): Second graders are working on handwriting and CHIPS sentence writing/editing. They are finishing up the Interactions unit in Science. They are beginning the Long Ago unit in Social Studies. In math, half of the classes are piloting the *Everyday Math 4* curriculum and half are continuing to use Investigations.

Third Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): Third graders are reading The Gold Threaded Dress, which addresses the issue of bullying. They are reviewing parts of speech and will begin working on expository writing. In math, students are learning addition and subtraction strategies. In science, the students are studying astronomy, including moon phases, planets, and the sun. They are studying the Wampanoag tribe in social studies. Open Circle topics covered classroom rules and expectations.

Fourth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): In reading, fourth graders are focusing on close reading strategies, and discussing theme and genre. Some classes are doing an animal fantasy unit. One class is doing a Roald Dahl unit. In writing, students are working on generating ideas, forming paragraphs, and planning using graphic organizers. The math unit is number sense. Students are reviewing place value, rounding, and saying numbers into the millions. They are also discussing different addition and subtraction strategies, reviewing the traditional algorithm for addition, and learning the algorithm for subtraction. The science unit on weather will cover the atmosphere and the water cycle. In social studies, students are practicing map skills. They are reviewing the continents and oceans, and learning about hemispheres, longitude and latitude. Open Circle topics covered classroom and playground rules/expectations.

Fifth Grade (presented by Katie Kerr): In reading, fifth graders are focusing on independent reading and choosing just right books. Close reading will be a theme for the year. Students are working on generating ideas for and adding details to their narrative writings. The math unit from the Everyday Math pilot is volume. Some classes are covering social studies while others are covering science. In social studies, students are learning about early native people and how where you live influences how you live. In science, students are learning about earth changes (e.g., layers of the earth, rocks and minerals). Open Circle topics covered classroom rules/expectations and mindfulness (e.g., calm breathing).

Physical Education (presented by Kate Mullen): Grades 3-5

completed an in-line skating unit and will begin a flag football unit. Grades K-2 are finishing a throwing/catching unit and will begin a kicking unit.

Library (presented by Kate Mullen): Kindergarteners are working on aspects of being in the library and checking books out, including using shelf markers, taking care of school books at home, and following rules in the library. First graders are working on ABC order to understand how books are arranged in the library (e.g., reading several ABC books and playing ABC order games). Second graders will learn about different reference books, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, and almanacs. Third graders discussed elements of fiction and now will focus on non-fiction information. Fourth graders began a unit on Genres, including mystery, historical fiction, myth, biography and fantasy. Fifth graders reviewed call numbers and are now working on finding non-fiction resources in preparation for future research projects.

Music (presented by Kate Mullen): All students in grades 2-5 are learning about the film composer John Williams. Most classes are exploring the literacy concept of meter. Kindergarten classes are singing songs and learning games (e.g., Old Mother Witch, Jump Jim Joe). First graders have practiced beats and are now expanding into the realm of clapping the words to the songs as different from the beats. Second graders are learning the new note, LA. They are dancing to a Swedish tune that goes faster and faster and are singing songs such as “Camptown Races” and “Molly Malone”. Third graders are singing songs and getting ready to play recorders. They are learning to read and write the new note, RE. Fourth graders are singing some partner songs, including “My Paddle with Land of the Silver Birch”, playing xylophones, and reviewing recorder playing. Fifth graders are studying early rock musicians, such as Chuck Berry and Elvis. They are reviewing reading music and playing xylophones. They practiced the Israeli dance Mayim. The 5th grade chorus is preparing to sing for the Town-wide MLK Celebration at the Fenn School in January.

Art (presented by Kate Mullen): Students in K-5 are working on collages. Kindergarteners are cutting shapes and arranging them on different background papers. First graders are making houses and self-portraits. Second graders are making things you can ride, favorite foods, and self-portraits. Third graders are depicting fun with family and friends. Fourth graders are making observations of toy cars and self-portraits. Fifth graders are making texture collages with pop outs.

Principal's Report (presented by Pat Fernandes): Mrs. Fernandes reports the school year is off to a great start. The ice cream social was well attended. Three Back-to-School nights included presentations from the special subject teachers (K), literacy specialists (Grades 1-2), and the math specialist (Grades 3-5). Mrs. Fernandes held her first principal coffee and will schedule more over the course of the year. School picture day ran smoothly. The Author's Fest sponsored by the PTG will run through October for Grades 1-5 and in the spring for Kindergarten. The Book Fair is scheduled for October.

District Report (Presented by Pat Fernandes): Mrs. Fernandes shared with SAC that Superintendent Diana Rigby announced her plan to leave the district when her contract expires after the 2016-2017 school year. Mrs. Fernandes expressed her appreciation for Mrs. Rigby's leadership. Mrs. Rigby and Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Operations John Flaherty are working hard to develop a preliminary 2016-17 CPS budget. Mrs. Fernandes discussed the continued piloting of the **Everyday Math 4** curriculum. Under the direction of Curriculum Director Kristen Herbert and the Elementary Steering Committee (ESC), teachers will provide input into the decision-making process and will ultimately make a curriculum recommendation to the Superintendent in the early spring. An exploratory committee studied the possibility of adding Spanish at the elementary level. The Superintendent received their recommendation continues to evaluate the potential of adding Spanish at the elementary level. It is a complicated decision since there are budget and time implications.

Overview of the Willard School Improvement Plan (presented by Pat Fernandes): Mrs. Fernandes asked council members to review the current plan prior the November meeting. The plan focuses on enhancing student achievement. It includes progress on goals over the past year and an overview of current goals. Mrs. Fernandes highlighted progress on the goals for English Language Arts and math. In ELA, Mrs. Fernandes discussed the developmental approach used to build literacy skills in Kindergarten. New iPads will soon be available and will be used for a variety of purposes including a particular Book Creator application for Kindergarteners and First Graders. Mrs. Fernandes outlined levels of additional reading support available to students. In math, Mrs. Fernandes discussed flexible groupings at different grade levels.

Selection of SAC Co-Chair: Kate Hennighausen will serve as SAC co-chair for the 2015-15 school year.

Adjournment:

The October meeting was adjourned. The next Willard SAC meeting will be November 2nd at 6:00 p.m. in the Willard conference rom.